

# MnDRA NEWS

The stormy season is here

## Distance Clinic

The clinic was very informative and the mock ride last week had 14 riders! While we had hoped for more, the ones that attended will probably start coming to more rides.

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It's all beautiful at Forestville.

Hi everybody,

Father's Day Weekend is coming and what better way to celebrate than to leave your husbands with the kids and go to SE to ride. It is my favorite ride, though I am still not strong enough to do a full ride, so you'll see me in the vet area yelling at you.

While Peggy's distance clinic and mock ride was somewhat low on attendance, the novices are still showing up at rides at high levels and that is good for MnDRA. Some are starting to do regular rides and others are planning to try a full ride by the end of the year.

While this is great, we MnDRA members need to be cognizant of the fact that we are the determining factor whether novices stay in the sport or not. On the survey I did late winter, one of the more common comments was how cliquy and sometimes rude we can be toward new people. I know I've caught myself using an exasperated voice confirming what someone already heard, not realizing that they are new to the sport, and the ride and ride camp is confusing to new people.

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## CDL anyone?

It's back. The great CDL debate. During the last legislative non-session, I contacted my state representatives about a possible two-word fix to the law which would make CDLs basically for commercial vehicles only. My Senator, Michelle Benson didn't bother to answer. My rep, Cal Bahr worked hard to find if the fix was needed or if we were ok. His inquiries finally fell on the desk of Laura Roads (think she gets kidded about working for the DOT?) a staff lawyer for the office of commercial operations in the DOT. Below, you will see her final answer to me.

*Good morning Mr. Meyer,*

*I'm hoping the information below will help clarify this issue for you and the members of the Minnesota Distance Riders Association.*

*For the most part, with one exception I'll mention below, as long as the vehicle or vehicle combination meets the definition of a "recreational vehicle", a CDL would not be required. Minnesota Statutes, section 171.02, subd. 2(c)(3) provides that a Class D license is valid operating a vehicle as defined in 168.002, subd. 27, that is operated for personal use. <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=171.02> Minnesota Statutes, 168.002, subd. 27, states that a "recreational vehicle" is a vehicle that: (1) is not used as the residence of the owner or occupant (only temporary living quarters); (2) is used while engaged in recreational or vacation activities; and (3) is either self-propelled or towed on the highways incidental to the recreational or vacation activities. <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=168.002>*

*The ONLY time that is not true is if you were pulling a recreational vehicle (trailer) with a*

*vehicle or power unit that has a GVWR that is more than 26,000 pounds. If the power unit itself is over 26,000 pounds, the driver would need a Class B license.*

*If a vehicle or vehicle combination does not meet the definition of a recreational vehicle and is over 26,000 lbs, a Class A license would be required.*

*The Minnesota State Patrol is primarily responsible for enforcement/ensuring compliance with various traffic, licensing and safety regulations. The safety and enforcement staff in MnDOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations have limited enforcement authority, and are not authorized to make traffic stops. Regardless of which agency might be involved, whether a certain law or exemption applies is determined on a fact specific/case-by-case basis and would rely on evaluation of the three criteria mentioned above. It may be worthwhile for you and the other members to carry copies of the two statutes referenced above. This is not a legal requirement, but it may be helpful to have the specific language available to reference in a conversation, if ever stopped by enforcement staff.*

*Please let me know if you have questions or if any of this information is confusing or brings up additional questions.*

*Laura Roads  
Staff Attorney  
MnDOT— Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations*

*It seems that the DOT lawyers are interpreting any vehicle or trailer that has a temporary living quarters is considered a recreational vehicle if not used for business. I described our four-horse trailer so she knew*

we can haul horses in it and took extra time to research it.

I know some folks have heard different things from other representatives of the DOT. I also realize that for the most part, this whole discussion is moot because you would probably have to be doing something else wrong to get pulled over with a typical pickup/horse trailer combo (like speeding through Gibbon on your way to RFTR.) Also, other states may have different rules, but again, what are the chances of getting picked up?

While getting a CDL does cure a lot of issues, it also comes with much stricter rules, such as an alcohol level at 0.04 when driving a commercial vehicle (your +26000 lb truck/trailer combo) will cost you your license. See this link for national CDL standards, <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/commercial-drivers-license/states>.

Also, in MN there is confusion about what constitutes the 26,000 lb. limit: actual weight, GVW, or GVWR? While most of the language discusses GVW, there is a statute that defines GVW as actual vehicle weight or GVWR, whichever is greater. So most of us probably go over with our GVWR.

So, my conclusion is that I plan to have copies of the two links Ms. Roads suggested and a copy of her email in my glove compartment and if I run into any issues in MN, I'll politely share them with the officer and see what s/he thinks. I'll also drive a little more properly with the trailer.

### Rant, continued

If we want riders to join the sport, we need to be more inviting both in camp and on the trail. In camp isn't hard; we just need to answer questions, that may seem obvious to us, in a pleasant and helpful manner and try to start a conversation to see if they have more questions. On the trail, we need to mentor riders. Too often comp groups break up into our own cliques and make outsiders unwelcome. LDs who aren't trying to place tend to do the same thing. I would not have stayed in the sport if not for Darlene, Doug Humphrey, Joyce Melby and others making me feel comfortable in the groups.

I remember an early SE ride where I was in a group with Joyce, and my horse, Sam was young and stupid. He was trotting sideways down the trail and Joyce gave me an exasperated look and asked if he was going to do that the whole ride? I told her he just does it the first mile or so. Instead of splitting off with a sub group, she moved her horse in front of us and worked as a calming brake for Sam. Joyce and I had a fun ride and many more after that.

All of us veteran riders have stories like the one above. So look around you at a ride and if you see someone new, ask if they want to ride with you. It's time for us to pay back.

## SE News

SE MN will be hosting the AHA Region 10 endurance and competitive rides this year. The endurance will be 50 miles on Saturday and the competitive will be 25 miles on Sunday. Bring your AHA stuff and join the fun, even if you don't have a sweepstakes horse. Registered arabs and half arabs can win cool stuff! An additional \$50 will be added to your entry if you ride the AHA part of the ride.

## MnDRA I Wrap

After a very snowy spring MnDRAI went on with only a slight hitch of the assistant ride manager having emergency surgery two days before the ride and being confined to his home during the event. (All is good with Ken and the doctor yelled at him this morning about keeping his glasses on for everything.)

This year there were 8 fifty-mile endurance riders, 13 LDs, 12 Competitives and 3 Competitive Drivers on Saturday. Sunday had 7 LDs, 4 Comps, 2 Drives, and 26 novices with 6 leaders. Thanks to the novices for coming because the clinic didn't happen until the second weekend of May because of the previously mentioned snow.

Thanks to Dr. Bonnie Miller, Dr. Delores Gockowski, and Dr. Dean Peterson. They are wonderful to work with and ride under as you know. We can not have rides without vets and I think we have some of the best in the Midwest!

Also the THANK YOU list is pretty long. I truly want to thank everyone who stepped up and helped this year when Ken couldn't be there and to those who already had planned to help. Our deep appreciation

to: Joan Thiel, Joan Elbert, Sheryl O'Brien, Lise and Dale Lunde, Becky Horihan, Deb Juettner, Bob & Lynda Zimmerman, Toni VonRuden, Candy Barbo, Suzy Warren, Terri McCarthy, Ed & Wendy Hauser, Janet Sarver, Diane Merz, Bev Specht, Victoria Robison, Sharon Hahn, Brian Larson (who volunteered for the first time and said it was FUN), Bob & Holly Egerer, Darlene Molitor, Jodi Johannessen, Kathy Vadnais, Emma Christopherson, Cathy Fischer, Kathy Vadnais, and several more who pitched in who I didn't write down. Thank you, Thank You, Thank YOU!

We had prize donations from Dr. Delores Gockowski, Platinum Performance - <https://www.platinumperformance.com/horses>, Nutramax - <http://www.nutramaxlabs.com/horse> and discounts and donations from Riding Warehouse - <http://www.ridingwarehouse.com/>

And we are blessed with great riders and crew for coming and enjoying the trails and competition. We will see you on the trail!

-Theresa & Ken  
MnDRAI ride managers

### *Upcoming Rides:*

**Southeast Minnesota**, June 16-17  
Forestville State Park

**Mosquito Run**, July 14 - 15.  
Crow Hassen Park Reserve

Ride flyers and other info found at:

<http://www.mndra.com/ride-schedule/>

### *Season 2:*

**Run for the Cactus**, Aug 18 - 19 Upper Sioux Reserve State Park

**Charity Cup**, Sept 8 - 9. Pillsbury State Forest

**Run for the Ridge**, Sept 21 - 22. Fort Ridgely State Park

**Point Chaser**, Oct 19 - 20. Zumbro Bottoms - West Assembly